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Navajo President Shelly Signs \$3Million Bill for Drought Relief

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed a bill that provides \$3 million for drought relief for the Navajo Nation. He signed the measure Thursday afternoon.

“We need to get help out there to the communities. We declared an emergency because of the drought, now we need to make resources available to help our people. We are in difficult times and thankful for the recent rains, but we still have to create plans to manage the drought,” President Shelly said.

Legislation CJY-44-13 provides about \$1.4 million to the Department of Agriculture for feral horse round ups, and \$202,761 to the Department of Resource Enforcement and the remainder to the Navajo Department of Water Resources for well and windmill repairs.

This legislation is similar to the one President Shelly vetoed early this month because of budget technicalities.

“As a leader, I must adhere to the laws of the Navajo Nation. I support drought relief, and I am thankful that we could work through the laws of our Nation to provide much needed resources to our Navajo departments and Rangers,” President Shelly said.

The money will come from the Undesignated Unreserved Fund Balance.

On July 1, President Shelly declared an emergency because of drought conditions throughout the Navajo Nation.

According to tribal precipitation statistics, Western Agency is about 65 percent below normal precipitation amounts this year, while Fort Defiance Agency is about 63 percent below normal. Northern and Eastern Agency are about 55 percent below average, while Chinle Agency is about 30 percent below average precipitation levels.

President Shelly also signed a memorandum ordering all executive departments to help update and revise a drought management plan.

“We are going to help our people through these tough times. I know it’s difficult with little vegetation for our livestock and small yielding crops. We are strong people and we will persevere through these challenging times,” President Shelly said.

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